



**Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State**  
**Mark Ritchie**  
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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **More Than 26,000 Absentee Ballots Distributed for August 12 Primary Election** *Nearly 16,000 Returned, Processed and Accepted*

**SAINT PAUL, Minnesota** — The Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State reports that 26,457 absentee ballots have been distributed to voters to-date for the August 12 Primary Election. Of those, 15,883 absentee ballots have been returned and accepted compared to 8,418 at this time in 2012 and 20,919 in 2010. Absentee ballots must be returned no later than Primary Election Day.

There is still time for voters to vote early with an absentee ballot in person at their [county elections office](#) or [local elections office](#) before the Primary Election. These offices are open for absentee voting during regular business hours on Thursday and Friday, as well as on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and on Monday until 5 p.m.

Upon requesting an absentee ballot, voters may use "[Absentee Ballot Lookup](#)" to find the status of their ballot, such as when it was mailed, and if their completed ballot was received and accepted by their local elections office. Mail ballot voters may also use this tool.

This election year, Minnesota voters will head to the polls to decide a U.S. Senate seat, all of Minnesota's eight U.S. House seats, as well as governor and other state officers, and all Minnesota State House seats. The 2014 election will also include many county commissioners, county sheriffs, county attorneys, auditors, treasurers and recorders.

For the first time, Minnesota voters can vote absentee without the need to provide an excuse, such as being ill or out of the precinct on Election Day. Voters may [request an absentee ballot](#) to be mailed to them through a new online tool at [mnvotes.org](http://mnvotes.org), eliminating the need to print, scan forms, and return by mail, fax or email. A similar tool for [military and overseas voters](#) was introduced in September 2013.

[Learn more about absentee voting at mnvotes.org.](#)

#### **More Voter Tools at mnvotes.org**

Voters are encouraged to visit [mnvotes.org](http://mnvotes.org) for other helpful online tools, including:

- Request Absentee Ballot — voters can easily request an absentee ballot online, rather than printing/scanning application forms, and returning by mail, fax or email.
- Absentee Ballot Lookup — voters can track the status of their absentee ballot.
- Voter Registration Lookup — voters can check if they are registered to vote at their current address.
- Online Voter Registration — more than 5,700 voters have successfully registered online since September 2013.
- My Ballot — voters can view their sample ballot and find links to candidates' websites.
- Polling Place Finder — voters can find their voting location.

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## 2014 Key Election Dates

- August 12 — Primary Election Day.
- September 19 — Absentee ballots will be available for the November 4 General Election.
- October 14 — Pre-registration deadline for the General Election. Voters are encouraged to pre-register to vote to avoid long lines and waits at the polling place. Voters who miss this deadline may still register at their polling place on Election Day, November 4.
- November 4 — General Election Day.

View all [2014 election dates](#) and [sign up to receive election-related email updates](#).

## About the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

The Secretary of State is the chief election official in Minnesota and is responsible for the administration of the state's election law. In this capacity, the office operates the Statewide Voter Registration System and prepares the official roster of voters for every election. The office also accepts filings by candidates, trains local election officials, and conducts voter education and outreach programs.

The Secretary of State is the keeper of the Great Seal of Minnesota and has the role of certifying the authenticity of a wide variety of official documents, including proclamations and executive orders.

A main function of the office is the review, approval and filing of articles of incorporation and amendments for all businesses and nonprofit organizations conducting business in Minnesota. The Secretary of State also processes all notary public applications; serves as the state's central filing system for lien information related to the Uniform Commercial Code; and administers Safe at Home, an address confidentiality program designed to assist Minnesotans who fear for their safety.

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